

Civic Engagement

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Utah State Office of Education
Life Skills, Academic Service Learning



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Happiness cannot come from without. It must come from within. It is not what we see and touch or that which others do for us which makes us happy; it is that which we think and feel and do, first for the other fellow and then for ourselves.

---Helen Keller

On the Road to Westminster

I was sitting in my office this morning wondering what to write for this newsletter. With new service learning grants due on September 5th, it seemed that I should write something to inspire you all to apply for the next round of funding. I was struck by the irony of using grants as incentives to inspire others to become involved in volunteer service. After all, shouldn't people give service without thought of a reward? Shouldn't we be learning to become altruistic? Then I thought about my study of Adam Smith and his belief in economic self interest. The idea was that as each seeks his own pursuits, the whole of society benefits. I didn't pick up feelings of compassion or charity in such thinking. The thought crossed my mind that if I concern myself with the things I need, perhaps others would benefit. Thus, I considered that service with an objective toward personal reward was a worthwhile effort. It may provide incentive to perform the service. But then, it seemed mercenary to perform service for a personal reward. Is it justifiable to have a reward in mind as service is performed?

Meanwhile it was time for me to leave my office and go to a workshop on the "Three Rs" – Rights, Respect and Responsibility. I travelled up 6th South, then waited at a light on 3rd East. There, on a corner, I observed a man extending a cane out in front of him, tapping to find the pavement and the grass. He was blind and was obviously waiting to cross the street in the opposite direction that I was going. When the light changed, instead of stepping out to cross the street, he backed away and appeared disoriented and frightened. I didn't want to be late to my workshop, and initially determined that he was not my concern. I proceeded to cross the intersection and travelled two more blocks, thinking that someone else would probably help him. Then my conscience started to work on me and I turned a corner and went around a couple of blocks. There he was, still tapping and backing away, not daring to step out into the road. I parked my car and quickly walked to him. I asked him if he needed some help. He said, "yes" and then told me that he had missed his bus and that he wanted to cross the street and go down the block southward to an apartment building. I put my hand on his shoulder and helped guide him across the street. When we had crossed, I led him to the sidewalk where we turned toward the apartments. I asked him if he was ok now and he replied affirmatively.

I let go of his shoulder and watched for a minute as he navigated his way down the street. I think he said "thank you", but I don't really recall. I went back to my car and proceeded to my workshop. My attitude was suddenly more bright and optimistic. I came to a stoplight at an intersection where I wanted to turn left. The light was just turning yellow, and there was a gap in the traffic. If I sped up a bit I could make it into the intersection and with slight inconvenience to those waiting to go the other direction, complete the turn. I elected not to do so, content to wait a few more minutes, deferring to others and the law. I was enjoying the good feeling that came from service, not concerned about tangible rewards or the benefits or disadvantages that would result from these interruptions to my schedule. I wondered if my employers would be ok with me pausing in my day's activities to help someone in need. After all, technically I was performing the service on their time. But then again, service learning is one of my assignments. I would hope that it would be important to exemplify the practices I teach.

So what incentives propelled me to my actions? First of all, my conscience was working on me and I didn't want to sear it. Secondly, and more importantly, the real reward is the tangible feeling of euphoria which I experienced. I can see nothing that is mercenary or undesirable in the pursuit of such rewards. I doubt anyone thinks of personal reward when it is time to help a blind man across the road. But the rewards come anyway. The theory of the butterfly effect proposes that any action, no matter how small or insignificant, can have profound ramifications. Indeed, every action has impact. Every act of service has a reward and compensation. Feelings that come from service add real value to life. How important is it for our students to experience these feelings. May we be perceptive and sensitive enough to reap the true benefits of service whether or not we hear the "thank yous", and provide similar opportunities for our students. This is the real reward of service and service learning.

—Alan Griffin

Academic Service Learning Grants - 2008

Deadline: September 5, 2008

Grant application forms are now online for this year's round of Service Learning Grants from Learn and Serve America. The State Office of Education, as the State Education Agency for Utah, will award approximately \$125,000 to local schools and districts throughout the state beginning in October. Individual schools may apply for grants up to \$2500 and districts may apply for funding up to \$20,000

Grant applications should describe projects that clearly reflect needs in the community that can be addressed by curriculum-related projects. Preference this year will be given to project proposals that focus on homeland security and emergency preparedness. Grantees must also be willing to involve participants in an online civic engagement survey.

Applications will be reviewed in September by a committee of peer reviewers who are not associated with any schools or districts. Those who wish to apply to be peer reviewers may apply at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/lifskills/ASL.htm> where application forms are stored.

Service Learning has been shown to have profound effects on civic engagement, dropout prevention, and school achievement. We encourage participation by all public schools and districts in the state. For further information, including application forms, visit the web site listed above.

Mock Election News

Voting date: October 30, 2008

As the November 4 national and state campaigns heat up, schools throughout the state are encouraged to participate in the national mock election. A central webpage, "Campaign for the Campaign" (<http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/civics/campaign/>) has numerous links, documents, and teacher resources. Of particular interest are a Power Point presentation, poster and reminder cards to encourage student participation. "Should I or Shouldn't I?" is a presentation designed for elementary students that explains the real purpose of the mock election.

Another great website linked from the above page is the PBS Teacherline page (<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/vote2008/>). This page features lesson plans, tools, podcasts and a variety of resources that teachers can use.

The upcoming election provides a great opportunity for students to become civically involved. The state website even contains suggestions for Service Learning projects related to the campaign.

State Farm Grants

The State Farm Youth Advisory Board is one of the nations' most exciting opportunities for youth empowerment and development. The board is comprised of 30 youth from around the United States and Canada who serve as equal members on the board. The board is given responsibility over the resources of \$5 million dollars to grant signature service-learning projects that seek to solve important community issues.

Youth Advisory Board grants are currently available! Grants range from \$25,000 to \$100,000 and are evaluated by the youth advisory board for how well they utilize service-learning to address:

- Driver Safety
- Environmental Responsibility
- Financial Literacy
- Access to Higher Education
- Disaster Preparedness

To apply for a grant, download the supplemental grant information and the grant application from the website at <http://www.statefarmyab.com/apply.php>. The supplemental grant information contains important information about how to effectively apply for a grant. It also provides insight into the way that the grants are evaluated and important things to consider when developing your grant.

Youth Service Marathon

September 13, 2008

The Utah Youth Service Marathon is a state-wide initiative to raise awareness of youth service through demonstrating the power of youth to change communities through civic engagement and service learning. It is likely the largest youth service initiative in Utah's history and will draw significant attention to the good that can be done in our society when people of all ages partner. Playing off the marathon theme (think: 26 miles) there will be 26 impactful service projects that will run from November 2008 - April 2009, each having an element of service on Global Youth Service Day April 25, 2009.

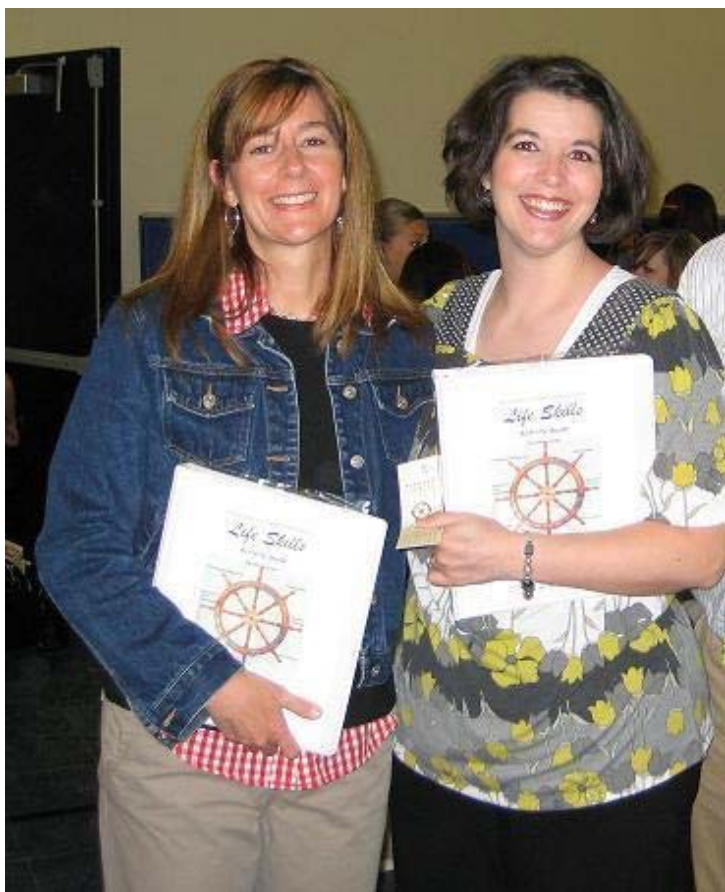
Please use the Request for Proposals form at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/lifskills/servicelearning/pdf/Request%20for%20%20Service%20Marathon%20Proposals.pdf> to apply to be one of 26 Flagship projects and receive up to \$1000 in seed money. Projects may be specified in 2008 Service Learning grant applications.

We need volunteers to staff the kick-off event, as well as youth participants to attend on September 13, 2008 at the state capitol. In conjunction with the State Capitol Preservation Board and Capitol Discovery Day there will be activities to learn about the capitol building and its grounds, a service project to benefit Utah's foster children, free entertainment, food and a fun run around the capitol ellipse walk-way.

To sign up to be a volunteer at the Kick-Off event please go to: <https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=639564>

Volunteers or participants in the Kick-Off event/Capitol Discovery Day should take advantage of the public transportation opportunities as parking on the capitol grounds is limited. There is a UTA bus that runs from the trax station downtown to the capitol building.

The Utah Youth Service Marathon is organized by the following committee of partners: Utah State Office of Education, Utah Commission on Volunteers, Association of Youth Councils, Utah Federation of Youth, Utah Campus Compact, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring, YouthLINC, and the State Capitol Preservation Board.



Tracey Alba and Jennifer Tillotson, recipients of Life Skills Achievement Award

Life Skills Achievement Awards

Tracey Alba and Jennifer Tillotson, both of Ranches Academy in Eagle Mountain are the latest recipients of the Life Skills Achievement Award. School faculty, staff, and students gathered to honor Tracey and Jennifer on April 21st.

Principal Darren Beck described Jennifer and Tracey as follows:

"Our middle school staff, specifically our full-time teacher, Jennifer Tillotson, has developed a solid overall program for our modified self-contained middle school which is a huge benefit to our students. She has successfully married CTE with various core subjects and elective classes which have given our students the feel of a more traditional middle school experience with the comfort of a purposefully small population. One of the best decisions we made last year and continued with this year was to participate in the Power Tour with Governor and Mrs. Huntsman. This program has provided ample support for our effort in weaving character and life skills training throughout the length and breadth of each student's academic experience here.

Mrs. Tillotson is a firm believer in developing the whole student and this is exemplified in the types of projects she chooses for her students. With the Power Tour, students are challenged to begin thinking for themselves, to not cave into negative peer pressure, and, more powerfully, engage their peers in positive and constructive discourse and efforts.

Jennifer Tillotson deserves to be recognized for her efforts because she approaches teaching any subject with the same desire: reach the whole child. She understands the seven domains of life skills create a richer, more useful educational approach for educators and students alike. It requires out-of-the-box thinking. She is a great asset to the students of our middle school program.

Tracey's efforts as our Middle School Teaching Assistant have been instrumental in the effective and successful development of programs to benefit all of our students. Working under the close supervision of myself as an administrator and of the lead Middle School teacher Mrs. Tillotson, Mrs. Alba has assisted with the successes of our Power Tour experience and the Christmas boutique, to name a few things. She has also created a wonderful hands on introductory Spanish elective that the students enjoy immensely and are gaining from it. Mrs. Alba is not only a gifted educator who works well with all students, she is also committed to being a life-long learner.

Tracey Alba deserves to be recognized for her efforts with regards to the impact she has on our students and their development as first class citizens. Her approach is to be fair, yet consistent with students and they know they can count on her for that. Like her friend and mentor, she knows employing the seven life skills domains create a richer, more useful educational experience for the students and educators."

Congratulations to these two excellent educators. Nominations for the Life Skills Achievement award may be made on the website at <http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/lifeskills/index.htm>

Constitution Day September 17, 2008

By law, any educational organization receiving federal funding is bound to teach about the constitution on Constitution Day, September 17th of every year. To assist teachers throughout the state in this effort, events celebrating the day will be broadcast over the internet.

The highlight of the day will be the reading of the preamble to the constitution by judges from Utah's court systems. This event, beginning at 12:00 noon, will be broadcast from the Matheson Courthouse in Salt Lake City.

Events are also being planned to broadcast a live mock trial for elementary students and a presentation of "We the People" for secondary students. All these events will be available to interested teachers over the internet for classroom broadcast. Those wishing to participate in this event should contact Alan Griffin (alan.griffin@schools.utah.gov 801-538-7761).



Graphic Novel Information

In an innovative effort to improve the public's awareness and knowledge about how the court works, the National Center for State Courts has produced a "graphic novel," titled *Justice Case Files: The Case of Internet Piracy*, that weaves together two stories—one civil and one criminal.

The National Center wanted to create a product to engage and to educate students and the public about how the justice system works. Through the stories told in *Justice Case Files* the hope is that students will learn how judges make decisions, how the courts operate, and the important role courts play in a democratic society.

To support and encourage middle and high school teachers to use the graphic novel for civic education, two social studies teachers from Virginia have developed a comprehensive lesson plan to accompany the graphic novel and have used the book in their classrooms.

Justice Case Files: The Case of Internet Piracy tells the story of Megan, a college freshman who has been charged with theft for downloading music, and her grandmother, Ellen, who has received notice that the city plans to take her house under eminent domain.

The Utah State Courts has purchased a limited number of the graphic novels to distribute to Utah schools. Teachers who are interested in copies of the graphic novel and lesson plan can e-mail Nancy Volmer at nancyv@email.utcourts.gov.

Dialogue on Democracy 2008

This year's Dialogue on Democracy is being planned for October 23, 2008. The keynote address will be delivered by Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs, the White House, Washington, D.C.

General Scowcroft was born in Ogden, Utah, in 1925. He was educated in Ogden City schools and then received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy, at West Point, N.Y., where he graduated in 1947. He received a master's degree in 1953 and a doctorate in 1967 in international relations from Columbia University attended Lafayette College, Georgetown University School of Language and Linguistics, Armed Forces Staff College, and the National War College.

He graduated from pilot training in October 1948 and then served in a variety of operational and administrative positions from 1948 to 1953. In July 1953 he was assigned to the Department of Social Sciences at the U.S. Military Academy, where he was appointed assistant professor of Russian history. He remained there until August 1957 when he entered the Strategic Intelligence School in Washington, D.C.

From June 1959 to August 1961 General Scowcroft was assigned as assistant air attache in the American Embassy, Belgrade, Yugoslavia. He then returned to the United States and entered the Armed Forces Staff College. In February 1962 he was transferred to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado and served as professor and acting head of the Political Science Department.

From September 1964 to June 1966 General Scowcroft was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force in the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, and served in the Long Range Planning Division, Directorate of Doctrine, Concepts and Objectives. He next attended the National War College at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

General Scowcroft was assigned in July 1968 to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and served in the Western Hemisphere Region. In September 1969 he was reassigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force in the Directorate of Plans as Deputy Assistant for National Security Council Matters. In March 1970 he joined the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and became the special assistant to the director of the Joint Staff.

General Scowcroft was appointed military assistant to the president in February 1972, and in August 1973 he was reassigned as deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs.

His military decorations and awards include the Distinguished Service Medal (Air Force design), Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, and the Air Force Commendation Medal. He has an aeronautical rating as pilot.

He was promoted to the grade of lieutenant general effective Aug. 16, 1974, with same date of rank.

*

This year's event will be held at Little America, in downtown Salt Lake. There will also be daytime sessions scheduled for teachers and students. Educators wishing to attend should contact Alan Griffin (alan.griffin@schools.utah.gov 801-538-7761) for arrangements.



UTAH STUDENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL MOCK ELECTION ON OCTOBER 30TH. MAKE SURE YOUR SCHOOL IS INVOLVED!



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C-Span's Studentcam 2009:

Dear C-SPAN Classroom members,

As you begin preparing for the 2008-2009 school year, C-SPAN would like to tell you about this year's StudentCam Competition. We had many excellent entries last year and expect to have many more for this year's competition. We are very excited about this year's theme, and we hope you will be too!

2009 StudentCam theme:

A Message To the New President...

Create a short documentary on the issue of national significance you believe is most urgent for the new president to address.

Just like last year, qualified entries must include some C-SPAN video, and must include more than one point of view.

Time limit:
5 to 8 minutes

Deadline:
Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009

StudentCam.org: We are in the process of updating our StudentCam web site. This information is not yet available on www.studentcam.org, but we wanted to contact you, so you have a chance to begin planning for this year's competition. We expect to roll out the new StudentCam web site by Labor Day (Monday, Sept 1).

In the meantime, if you have any questions about this year's competition, please do not hesitate to contact us at educate@c-span.org or 1(800) 523-7586.

Best wishes,
C-SPAN Classroom
www.c-spanclassroom.org

Great Web Sites

PBS Teacherline Election Tools - <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/vote2008/>

Service Learning and Voting -
http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/hot_topics/voting/

Should I or Shouldn't I? A Mock Election Primer -
<http://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/civics/campaign/Should%20I%20or%20Shouldn't%20I.ppt>

USOE Websites:

Life Skills — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/civics/lifskills/index.htm>

Character Ed — http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char_ed/default.htm

Civics — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/civics/index.htm>

Service Learning — <http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/servicelearning/index.htm>